

Soc. & Pol. - Saturday Review

World

THE PRESS

Grave New World

Where did the old *Saturday Review* go? Right up the street, as it turns out. Norman Cousins, who stalked away from *SR* and its new owners' overhaul plans seven months ago, last week put out the first biweekly issue of *World* magazine; it is the deadeast of ringers for *SR* as it used to be.

Cousins greeted his newsstand customers and 75,000 charter subscribers with the Cousinsish statement that the "ultimate adventure on earth is the adventure of ideas," and added that *World* "would like to be part of that adventure." Cautiously, he went on to say that the "editors do not regard this issue as a definitive expression of their ideas about *World*" because "a new magazine is not born fully formed."

Just as well. Vol. I, No. 1 is dominated by worthy but wordy pieces that reflect the stodginess of the old *Saturday Review*. U Thant's lead story reads uncannily like the Cousins editorial: both deal in leaden tones with what they proclaim as the new global brotherhood of man. The former U.N. Secretary-General goes on to note that there is no alternative to—guess what—the U.N.

There is a "World Progress Report" that features only good news, such as the intelligence that the U.N.'s new "disaster relief coordinator" has begun to attempt to coordinate relief. From International Editor Roland Gelatt (based in London) comes a detailed analysis of what will happen to London's Covent Garden Market when the area undergoes urban renewal 18 months hence.

There is a report on the Stockholm environmental conference, written well before the event, and an analysis of the Middle American, that citizen already so often discovered. Cleveland Ace and Goodman Amory—or is it Cleveland Amory and Goodman Ace?—grind out their stale *SR* humor.

Elsewhere, the pleasingly plump issue (132 pages) makes for better reading. The critical sections—books, ballet, music, films—are excellent. There is a warm, highly readable story on Philanthropist Louis Schweitzer, an intriguing discussion of world mass-transit problems, and a thoughtful piece on the future of education. Selden Rodman, the Haiti buff, contributes an upbeat piece on life in the Caribbean republic. A photo spread of aerial landscapes shot by Dr. George Gerster, a Swiss science editor, is beautifully laid out.

But these editorial assets seem outweighed by the clinkers. Of what value is a column of youth notes, written by a Harvard sophomore, that says nothing new, significant or even witty about youth? Or a "Calendar of Global Events" that alerts readers to affairs such as the Third International Conference on Dielectric Liquids in Dublin next month? Columnist Amory ends his first *World* column this way: "Satisfaction guaranteed, we've always said, or your product back." On the basis of the first issue, the temptation is to ask where one gets in line.

MORI/CDF